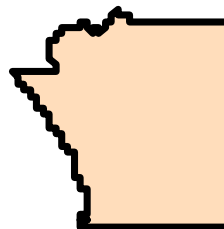
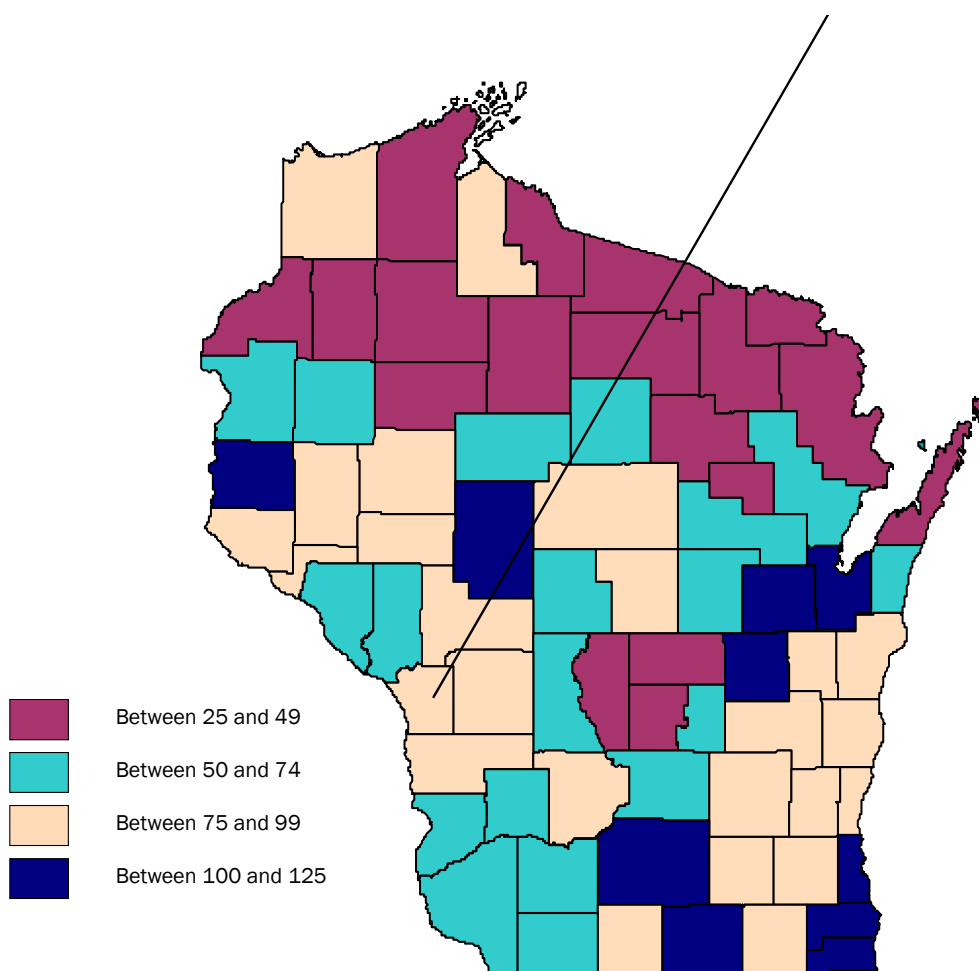


La Crosse County Workforce Profile



**The number of residents aged 25-29 years for every
100 residents aged 60-64 years in year 2025**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center and the U.S. Bureau of Census.

For comparison, it is projected that there will be 90 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64 in Wisconsin in 2025. Nationally, it is projected that there will be 101 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 residents aged 60-64. In 2003, Wisconsin had 146 residents aged 25-29 for every 100 aged 60-64.



County Population

From Census 2000 to January 2004 the population in La Crosse County increased at a slower pace than in the nation and Wisconsin. The population increased 2.3 percent with the addition of 2,496 residents. Nine of the ten largest municipalities added population, with just the City of La Crosse losing population over the last four years. Together, the population

Total Population

	April 2000 Census	Jan. 1, 2004 estimate	Numeric change	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	292,287,454	10,865,548	3.9%
Wisconsin	5,363,715	5,532,955	169,240	3.2%
La Crosse County	107,120	109,616	2,496	2.3%
Largest Municipalities				
La Crosse, City	51,818	51,507	-311	-0.6%
Onalaska, City	14,839	15,782	943	6.4%
Holmen, Village	6,200	6,984	784	12.6%
Onalaska, Town	5,210	5,406	196	3.8%
West Salem, Village	4,738	4,809	71	1.5%
Shelby, Town	4,687	4,772	85	1.8%
Campbell, Town	4,410	4,417	7	0.2%
Holland, Town	3,042	3,168	126	4.1%
Hamilton, Town	2,103	2,292	189	9.0%
Farmington, Town	1,733	1,843	110	6.3%

Source: Wis. Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

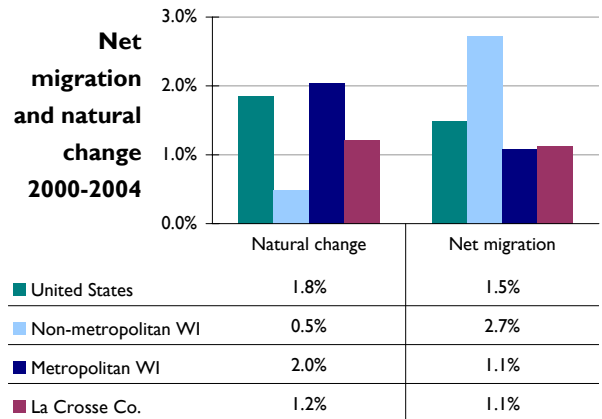
total for the ten largest municipalities increased by 2,200 residents, accounting for 88 percent of the population growth in the county.

In La Crosse County the two components of population growth, natural increase and net migration, each accounted for about half of the population growth in the county. This is atypical of the usual metropolitan growth pattern found in Wisconsin. Usually, natural change accounts for two-thirds of population growth in a Wisconsin metropolitan county. One might reasonably infer that the fertility rate is lower in La Crosse County than other metropolitan counties in Wisconsin. With three institutes of higher learning in La Crosse, the younger population is more likely working on obtaining a degree before starting a family.

Population dynamics are important measurements in terms of current labor market information and future economic potential. One must not only examine how much the population has changed, but one should also antici-

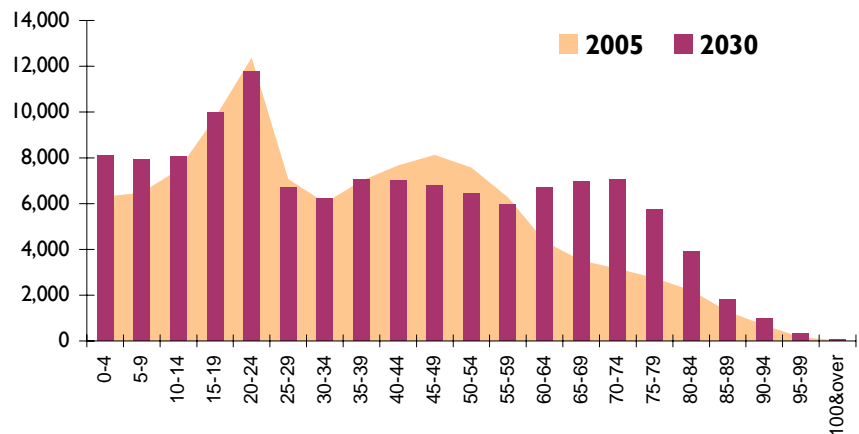
pate its future change. The graph at the bottom plots La Crosse County's projected population in 2005 and 2030 by age group. La Crosse's population is forecasted to grow about 14 percent (+15,375 residents) between 2005 and 2030. La Crosse's forecast is slightly slower than the state's 15 percent growth forecast. The layout of the graph shows that population growth in La Crosse County will occur almost entirely in the retired and near retirement age groups.

A more detailed examination of the county's age group projections shows that the percentage of those ages 19 and younger will increase by 13 percent. The number of those in their prime working years, ages 20-59, will decrease substantially, by seven percent. The lion's share of growth in numeric terms will be seen in those ages 60 and older increasing by 86 percent, almost doubling over the next 25 years. From a compositional standpoint, those 19



Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services and U. S. Census Bureau

Population by Age Groups in La Crosse County



Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

Future Population and Labor Supply

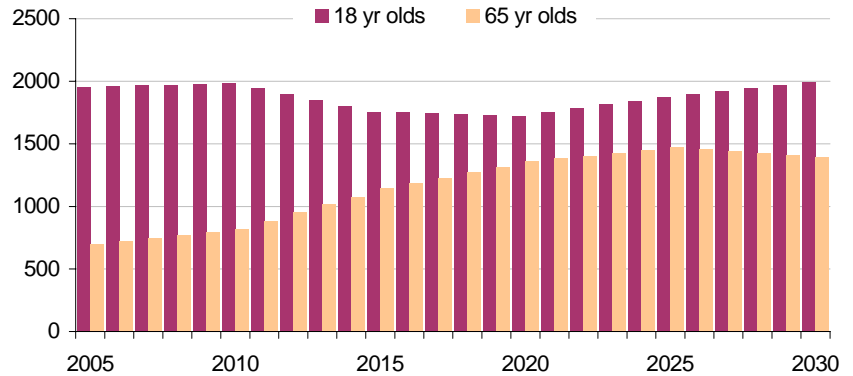
and younger will remain 26 percent of the total population in 2030. The age group 20-59 will decrease from 55 percent to 45 percent of the total. And those ages 60 and older will increase from 17 percent to 24 percent of the county's population.

The graph to the right shows an example of how these changes in age composition will affect La Crosse County's workforce juxtaposing the number of those age 18 and age 65 each year from 2005 to 2030. One will notice that the number of those age 18 decreases until 2020, then reverses into a modest growth trend. Those age 65 will double by 2020.

This graph reports a different trend than most counties in Wisconsin including all the border counties to La Crosse. In most Wisconsin counties the 18 year old and the 65 year old graphs cross at some point, with the 18 year old total dropping below the 65 year old total. In most counties this occurs somewhere between the years 2010 to 2020. La Crosse's stability in this group (18 year olds) is due to the fact that it houses a state university, technical college, and a private university drawing in younger population.

However, La Crosse's apparent stability in the 18 year old age has not protected the county from the acute labor shortages of the late 90s, nor will it insulate La Crosse from the coming labor shortages in the future. If instead of 18 as the lower age, 25 was chosen, the graph would report the same crossing of the younger and older age as reported in other counties. By 2020, there will be more people in La Crosse County celebrat-

Convergence of 18 & 65 year old population in La Crosse County

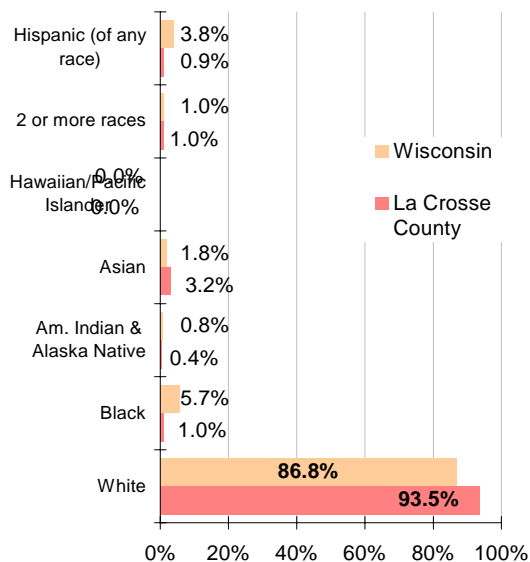


Source: WI Dept. of Administration, Demographic Services

ing their 65 birthday than their 25th or 30th. These demographic forecasts present a number of issues to address. Strategies for the future should include the retention of more college graduates.

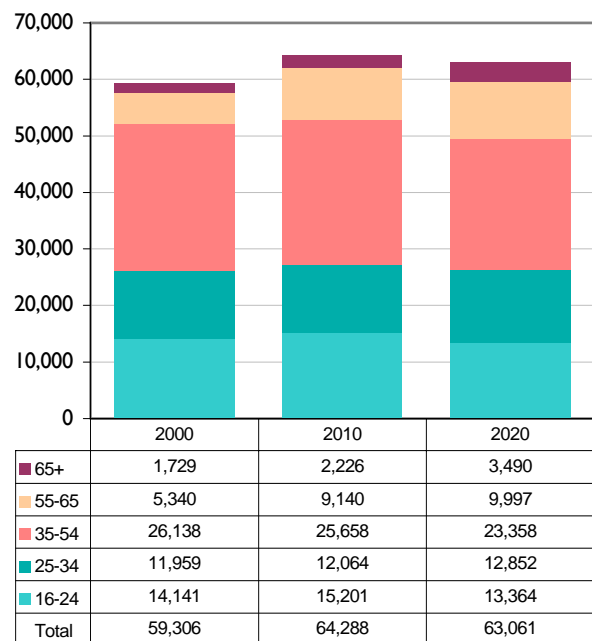
La Crosse County's labor force will become older, on average, though it is uncertain whether its workers will remain in the labor force longer than they do currently. Trends suggest that workers are currently retiring at younger ages.

Race and ethnic distribution



Source: U.S. Census Population Characteristics Estimates, 2002

La Crosse County Labor Force Projections by Age



Decade change **15.2%** **8.4%** **-1.9%**

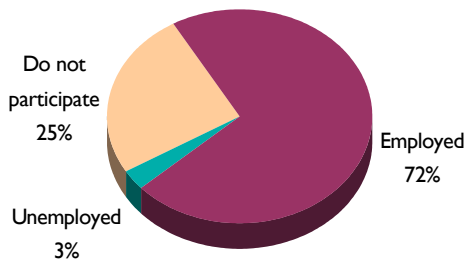
Source: DVD, Office of Economic Advisors, August 2004

Current Labor Force

Labor force participation (LFPR) represents the share of population that is 16 years and older that is either employed or unemployed but actively seeking work. Participation rates in Wisconsin and the United States in 2003 were 72.9 and 66.3 percent, respectively.

In La Crosse County a participation rate of 75 percent means that 25 percent of the population 16 years and older did not participate.

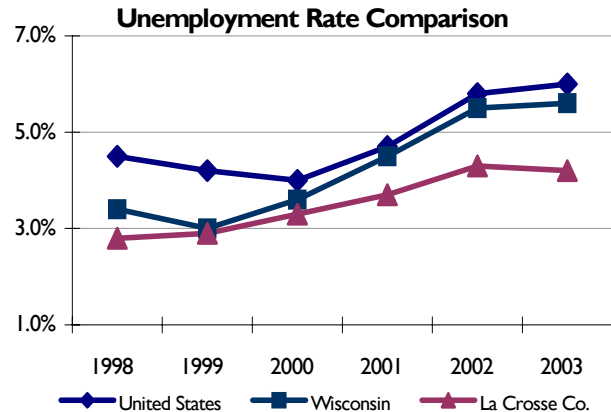
Labor force participation in La Crosse County



Source: DWD, Office of Economic Advisors, July 2004

That includes some students, individuals who choose not to work including retirees. As the population ages, there will be an increasing number of retirees and labor force participation rates will decline. The impact of fewer new entrants to the labor force is one of the reasons unemployment rates during the last recession remained as low as they did.

La Crosse's LFPR has reached its maximum and will probably not climb much higher in the foreseeable future. The county's LFPR will likely recede, but to what extent is unknown. The county's age demographics will spur this reduction and economic changes will play little part in this.



La Crosse County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Labor Force	60,518	59,196	61,135	62,506	62,530	63,503
Employed	58,835	57,474	59,137	60,219	59,864	60,846
Unemployed	1,683	1,722	1,998	2,287	2,666	2,657
Unemployment Rate	2.8%	2.9%	3.3%	3.7%	4.3%	4.2%

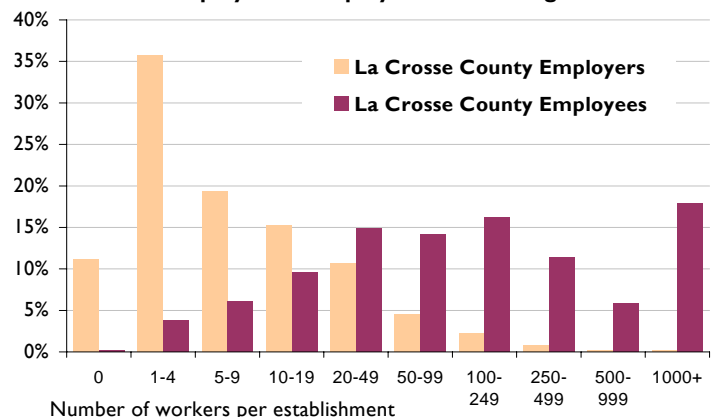
Source: WI DWD, Bur. of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2003

Employers by Size

The majority of La Crosse County's employers are small, as approximately 81 percent of them employ between one and 19 employees. While this may seem to be an inordinately large share of smaller employers in the county, it is just modestly larger than the average county's mark of 70 percent. The term "small employer" is subjective. Some define it as fewer than 500 employees and some as low as fewer than 20 employees.

From the employee perspective, the highest share of the county's workers are employed in establishments with 1,000+ workers, 18 percent of people working in La Crosse County work for an employer with 1,000 or more employees. In a close second is employers with 100-249 employees, 16 percent of workers work for employers of this size.

Share of employers & employees in size range in 2003



Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Table 221, July 2004

Industry & employers by size

Examination of a county's labor market from the demand (employer) side of view is essential to gauge the type of workforce employers are seeking. The tables below outline the top employers by industry and the top employers by name and establishment size. The pie-graphs to the bottom indicate the prominence of these top industries and employers in terms of the county's total employment.

It is common that services-providing industries are the sectors

showing the largest and fastest employment growth in both one- and five-year periods. Some goods-producing sectors, manufacturing industries, may show a large presence in terms of total employment, but they may show a loss of employment over these timeframes. It is also common that many counties traditionally heavy in goods-producing employment now have services-providers, particularly health and education services, as their larger employers and industry sectors.

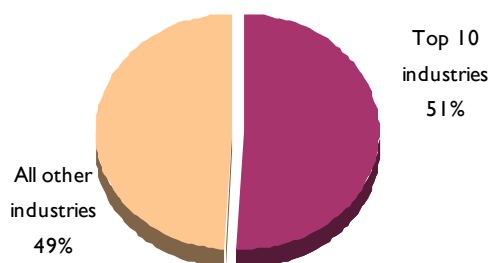
Top 10 Industries in La Crosse County

Industry	March 2004		Numeric Employment Change	
	Establishments	Employees	2003-2004	1999-2004
Educational services	28	5,413	-15	471
Food services & drinking places	211	5,095	108	250
Hospitals	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Ambulatory health care services	106	3,939	-100	503
Machinery manufacturing	suppressed	suppressed	not avail.	not avail.
Administrative & support services	97	2,691	261	292
General merchandise stores	12	2,282	327	330
Credit intermediation & related activity	42	2,076	63	596
Social assistance	46	1,909	138	318
Nursing & residential care facilities	17	1,781	-24	-41

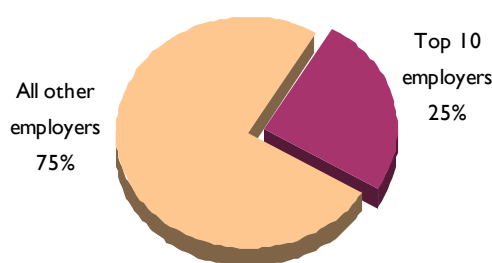
Top 10 privately owned Employers in La Crosse County

Establishment	Product or Service	Size (Dec. 2003)
Gundersen Lutheran Administrative	Offices of physicians, except mental health	Over 999 employees
American Standard Inc.	AC, refrigeration, and forced air heating	Over 999 employees
Franciscan Skemp Medical Center Inc.	General medical and surgical hospitals	Over 999 employees
First Federal Capital Bank	Savings institutions	Over 999 employees
KWIK Trip Inc.	Convenience stores	Over 999 employees
Reinhart Foodservice Inc.	General line grocery merchant wholesalers	500-999 employees
Wal-Mart Associates Inc.	Discount department stores	500-999 employees
Centurytel Service Group LLC	Managing offices	500-999 employees
Northern Engraving Corp.	Plastics product manufacturing	500-999 employees
Bethany-St Joseph Corp.	Nursing care facilities	250-499 employees

Share of jobs in top 10 industries in La Crosse County



Share of La Crosse County jobs with top 10 employers



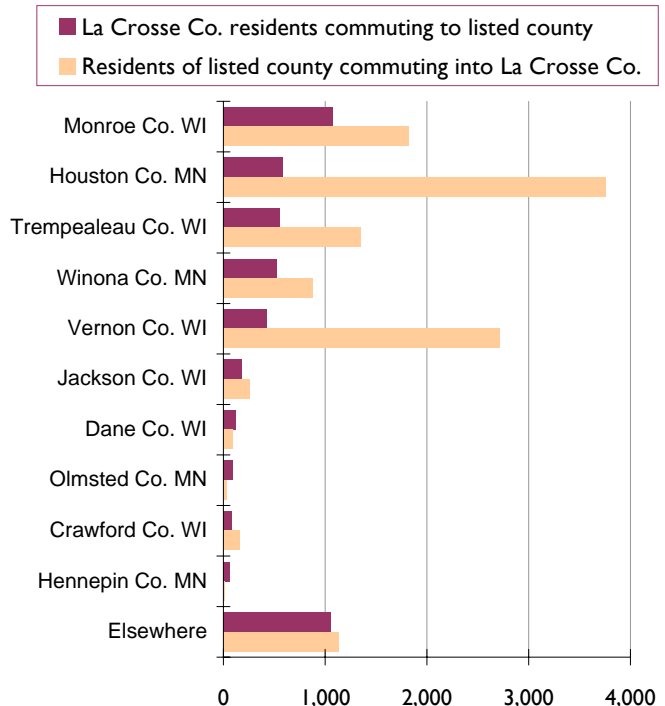
Commuting

The worker flow patterns for La Crosse County are dominated by the traffic to and from Houston County, Minnesota, and Vernon County, Wisconsin. Since the Mississippi River separates La Crosse County and Minnesota, commuter routes to Minnesota are limited to highways with a bridge across the river.

In the last ten years, La Crosse County has continued to gain workers from surrounding counties during the daily commute. In 1990, La Crosse County had a daily net gain of 4,381 workers from outside the county. According to Census 2000, the net amount of workers commuting into La Crosse County almost doubled, increasing to 7,474 workers.

The actual increase in workers coming into La Crosse for work from other counties was 71 percent, while employment during the same ten year period increased just 22 percent. This continual increase of workers coming into the county has contributed to increasing travel-to-work times in La Crosse and surrounding counties.

The net number of workers gained from Houston County, Minnesota increased from 2,491 in 1990 to 3,180 in 2000. The net number of workers gained from Monroe County in the daily commute increased from a mere 61 workers in 1990 to 752 in 2000.



Source: U.S. Census 2000, Special tabulations: Worker Flow Files

Key occupations & wages

The table to the right lists occupations with the most employment and their wages in the La Crosse Metropolitan Statistical Area (La Crosse County Wisconsin & Houston County Minnesota) as of May 2003. The wages shown include the mean (average) and the median (50th percentile). The 25th and 75th percentile wages are also included to help give an indication of entry-level and experienced worker wages. The 25th percentile indicates that 75 percent of the total workers in this occupation earn more per hour than this wage. The 75th percentile wage indicates that 25 percent of workers make more than this hourly wage.

If mean and median wages are close, the labor market is probably competitive for hiring employers. If the median is significantly below the mean, an employer offering mean wages should have an advantage in attracting workers. However, prospective workers will find a higher than average level of competition for these jobs.

Occupation title	Hourly Wages			
	Mean	25 th	50 th	75 th
Retail salespersons	\$9.48	\$6.60	\$7.98	\$10.61
Registered nurses	\$20.93	\$18.13	\$20.43	\$22.58
Cashiers	\$7.92	\$6.47	\$7.69	\$9.25
Truck drivers, heavy & tractor-trailer	\$17.07	\$14.17	\$16.30	\$19.45
Office clerks, general	\$11.36	\$8.50	\$10.64	\$13.19
Comb. food prep. & serving workers (fast food)	\$7.12	\$6.10	\$6.82	\$7.95
Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants	\$10.01	\$8.89	\$9.94	\$11.01
Janitors & cleaners, except maids & housekeeping	\$9.79	\$7.66	\$9.08	\$11.62
Waiters & waitresses	\$6.56	\$5.76	\$6.26	\$6.75
Stock clerks & order fillers	\$10.12	\$7.48	\$8.96	\$11.54
Customer service representatives	\$12.50	\$9.25	\$11.32	\$14.10
Bookkeeping, accounting, & auditing clerks	\$12.46	\$10.30	\$12.14	\$14.06
Laborers & freight, stock, & material movers, hand	\$10.53	\$8.10	\$9.96	\$12.74
Secretaries, except legal, medical, & executive	\$11.78	\$9.54	\$11.10	\$13.43
Teacher assistants	*	*	*	*
Receptionists & information clerks	\$10.29	\$8.54	\$10.18	\$11.81
Industrial truck & tractor operators	\$15.35	\$12.59	\$15.35	\$18.21
Personal & home care aides	\$8.84	\$7.86	\$8.65	\$9.72
Team assemblers	\$12.99	\$10.15	\$13.53	\$15.82
Sales reps, whls. & mfg, except tech. & scientific	\$23.35	\$15.01	\$20.65	\$26.47

La Crosse County is part of an area which includes La Crosse County WI & Houston County, MN.

Employment and Wages

The average wage for all workers in La Crosse County, \$29,982, increased 2.7 percent from the 2002 average of \$29,207. Statewide the average wage rose 3.1 percent in 2003 to \$33,423. This average wage paid to the average worker working in La Crosse is almost 11 percent lower than the statewide overall average. La Crosse County's overall wages are higher than the statewide average in just two industry sectors, natural resources and information. Neither of these two sectors have a substantive presence in La Crosse County.

Education and health services is La Crosse County's largest employing sector (see graph below) contributing more to the county's total wages than the county's total employment. The second largest employing sector, trade, transportation and utilities, employs fewer than education and health services, and its share of total payroll is lower than its share of total employment. Manufacturing, the third largest employing sector, paying a larger amount of the county's total wages than it employs. The annual average wages that an industry sector pays can depend upon many factors such as its geographic location, seasonal activity, and presence of

Average Annual Wage by Industry Division in 2003

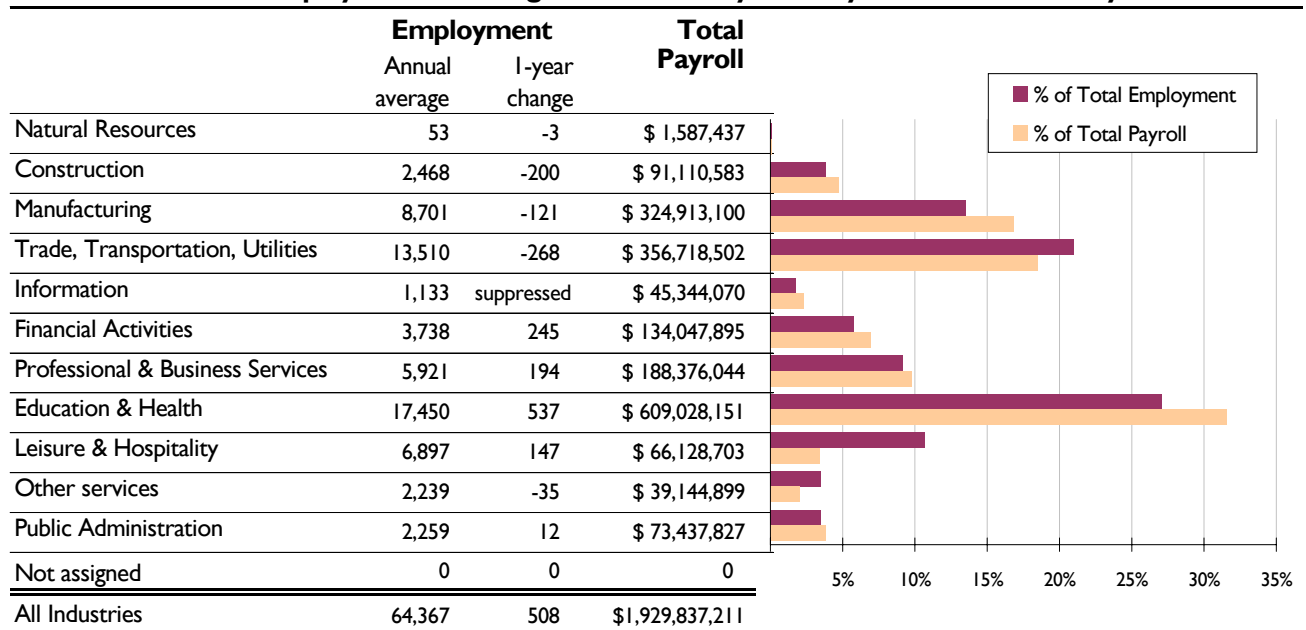
	Average Annual Wage		Percent of	1-year
	Wisconsin	La Crosse County	Wisconsin	% change
All Industries	\$ 33,423	\$ 29,982	89.7%	2.7%
Natural resources	\$ 25,723	\$ 29,952	116.4%	11.9%
Construction	\$ 40,228	\$ 36,917	91.8%	-6.4%
Manufacturing	\$ 42,013	\$ 37,342	88.9%	0.5%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	\$ 28,896	\$ 26,404	91.4%	1.6%
Information	\$ 39,175	\$ 40,021	102.2%	Not avail.
Financial activities	\$ 42,946	\$ 35,861	83.5%	3.5%
Professional & Business Services	\$ 38,076	\$ 31,815	83.6%	9.2%
Education & Health	\$ 35,045	\$ 34,901	99.6%	3.5%
Leisure & Hospitality	\$ 12,002	\$ 9,588	79.9%	2.1%
Other services	\$ 19,710	\$ 17,483	88.7%	2.6%
Public Administration	\$ 35,689	\$ 32,509	91.1%	5.3%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

workers under collective bargaining agreements, etc. But the most crucial wage structure component is an industry's occupational composition. Even two companies in the same industry and the same county could show differing average wages if their occupational compositions are significantly different.

Some industries employ a higher than average share of entry-level, part-time or seasonal workers. The leisure and hospitality sector is a good example of a seasonally employing

2003 Employment and Wage Distribution by Industry in La Crosse County



Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, June 2004

Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita personal Income (PCPI) is the combination of all manners in which people or families or households obtain monies. The majority of a county's total personal income is obtained from wages earned at jobs. La Crosse County's residents, as a whole, obtain an average share of its total income from the three principal components of PCPI (net earnings, dividends/interest/rent, & transfer payments).

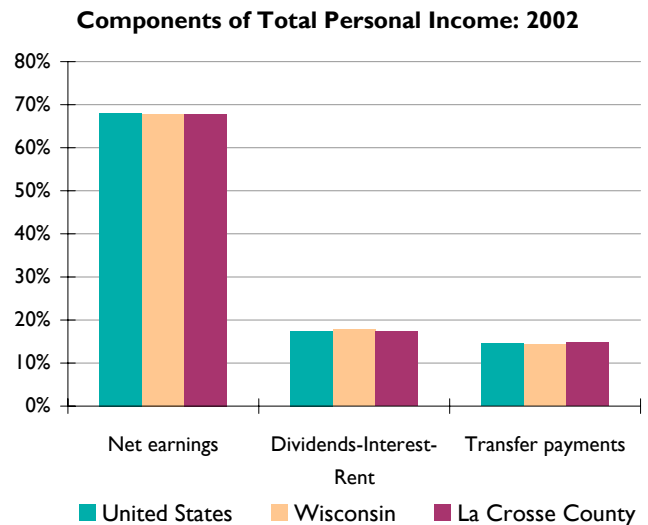
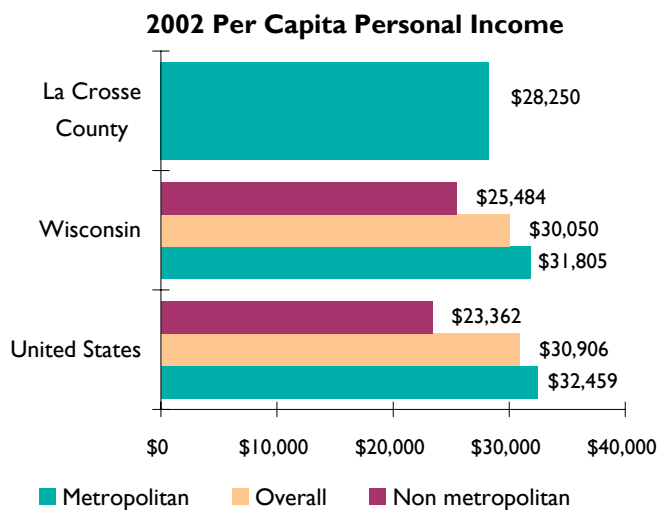
La Crosse County's PCPI in 2002 of \$28,250 ranked 17th highest of Wisconsin's 72 counties. Per capita income can be influenced by the number of wage earners, average family size, the types of occupations available, average age of the

residents, and the county's labor force participation rate.

La Crosse's PCPI is 95 percent of the statewide PCPI even though average wages are just 90 percent of the statewide average. La Crosse has a higher labor force participation rate than the state's meaning, in part, that there are more two-income households and multiple job holders in La Crosse than the statewide average. However, PCPI in La Crosse is still lower than the average PCPI of all of Wisconsin's metropolitan counties.

	Per Capita Personal Income						Percent Change	
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1 year	5 year
United States	\$25,334	\$26,883	\$27,939	\$29,847	\$30,527	\$30,906	1.2%	22.0%
Wisconsin	\$24,514	\$26,175	\$27,135	\$28,573	\$29,361	\$30,050	2.3%	22.6%
Metropolitan WI	\$25,972	\$27,711	\$28,770	\$30,317	\$31,106	\$31,805	2.2%	22.5%
La Crosse County	\$22,715	\$24,220	\$25,014	\$26,015	\$27,314	\$28,250	3.4%	24.4%
In current dollars (adjusted to U.S. CPI-U)								
United States	\$28,397	\$29,670	\$30,170	\$31,181	\$31,010	\$30,906	-0.3%	8.8%
Wisconsin	\$27,478	\$28,889	\$29,301	\$29,850	\$29,825	\$30,050	0.8%	9.4%
Metropolitan WI	\$29,111	\$30,584	\$31,067	\$31,672	\$31,598	\$31,805	0.7%	9.3%
La Crosse County	\$25,461	\$26,731	\$27,011	\$27,179	\$27,746	\$28,250	1.8%	11.0%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, May 2004



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, May 2004

The county workforce profiles are produced annually by the Office of Economic Advisors in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. The author of this profile and regional contact for additional labor market information is:

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email: William.Brockmiller@dwd.state.wi.us

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) - A single county or group of counties that include at least one urbanized area with a minimum population of 50,000. Multiple-county MSAs have a central county or counties, which have a high degree of social and economic integration with the other member counties as measured by commuting data.

Non-metropolitan county - Any county that is not a member of a metropolitan statistical area.

Net Migration - One of two components of population change. It is the net result of individuals who either moved into or out of an area.

Natural Change - One of two components of population change. It is the result of the number of births minus the number of deaths in an area over a period of time. A natural increase indicates there were more births than deaths. A natural decrease indicates there were more deaths than births.

Employed - Persons 16 years of age or older, who worked as paid employees, or worked in their own business, profession or farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise. Includes those temporarily absent from their jobs due to illness, bad weather, vacation, childcare problems, labor dispute, maternity or paternity leave, or other family or personal obligations.

Unemployed - Persons 16 years of age or older with no employment, who were available for work and made efforts to find employment sometime during the previous 4-week period ending with the monthly reference week. Persons who were awaiting recall to a job did not need to look for work to be classified as unemployed.

Labor Force - The sum of the employed and unemployed, whom are at least 16 years of age and older.

Unemployment Rate - The number of unemployed divided by the labor force. It is expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) - The labor force divided by the total population aged 16 years and older. It is expressed as a percentage of the population aged 16 years and older.

Suppressed - Data is withheld or suppressed if it does not meet certain criteria. If an industry in a county has fewer than three employers or if a single employer employs 80% or more that industry's total employment in that county then the data are suppressed. These criteria were established to maintain the confidential reporting of payroll and employment by employers.

Total Personal Income - The aggregate income of an area received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements (less contributions for government social insurance), supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts that include retirement and veteran's benefits, government paid medical reimbursements, and income maintenance program payments.

Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) - Total personal income divided by the total population.

Current Dollars - Phrase used to express historical dollar values in terms of their current purchasing power via inflation adjustment.

CPI-U - Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, the most commonly used measure of inflation in the United States.